

INTRODUCTION

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would do so in one sense, indeed, even more significantly than much of the material offered in the present volume, since it represents a large part of the children's positive, constructive social relations. Whereas a good deal of the behaviour to be quoted now represents either the pre-social matrix of individual feeling and phantasy out of which social relations are differentiated, or those disruptive forces which have to be transformed before positive social relations can be maintained. For a full or a just picture of social development in young children, therefore, the two volumes need to be read together.

B. In the second place, a glance at the table of contents of this volume will show that I have included in my present survey a great deal of behaviour which would not ordinarily be called "social" in the narrow meaning. In the strictest sense of organised group reciprocity, there is little truly social behaviour among children under seven or eight years. Piaget has expressed this fact by saying that it is not until seven or eight years that "the social instinct develops . . . in clear-cut forms".* I do not myself feel that this is the best way of regarding the facts referred to, for reasons I hope to show in my theoretical chapter. But the facts themselves are fairly certain. Not until the middle years of childhood does one see that ability in the child to identify himself with his equals, and to maintain a positive attitude to them in spite of minor differences of individual interest, which underlies *stable* group relations. In the earlier years, the child is very largely a naïve egoist, and other children are to him mainly rivals for the love and approval of adults. With continuous support from adult justice and adult love, little children can carry on sustained co-operative pursuits, but their ability to

do so seems to rest heavily upon this binding force of the love and approval of adults.

The more truly social ways of older children have their *beginnings* in early childhood, however. Their roots lie in the family itself. The child's relation with his mother can be called social from a very early age, in the sense that there is a mutual action and reaction of feeling and behaviour.

And his complicated emotional attitudes towards the two parents together and separately from, say, six months onwards, are the key to many of his later responses to other children. The "social instincts" do not appear in the child unheralded.

¹ J. Piaget, *Judgment and Reasoning in the Child*, p. 209.